

Appl. No. 10/803,413
Response to Office Action mailed July 25, 2007

Atty Dkt. No. 114141-017

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the patent application.

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Claims 1-3 (cancelled).

Claim 4 (currently amended): A fastener comprising first and second stringer tapes, each with a row of coupling elements mounted thereon, such that when the fastener is closed, said stringer tapes are connected to each other by means of said coupling elements, each row of coupling elements comprising a first area and a second area where the coupling elements on the first and second tapes are engaged when the fastener is closed; and holding means provided in a gap between said first and second areas for holding said tapes together at a predetermined position intermediate said first and second areas, the holding means having said first area and second area of the coupling elements formed on its opposed sides, the holding means being released when a force greater than a predetermined value exerted by an impact of an airbag when the airbag is inflated is applied to the holding means, to allow or cause the coupling elements within the first and second areas to disengage.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claim 4, wherein said holding means comprises a pair of sliders, and a stopper is provided to stop the sliders at the predetermined position.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claim 5, wherein said holding means comprises linking means to connect said pair of sliders together.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claim 6, wherein said linking means is an element separate to each slider, said linking means having first engaging means for engaging with the first slider, and second engaging means for engaging with the second slider.

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Claim 8 (original): A fastener as claimed in claim 4, wherein said holding means comprises a link which connects the stringer tapes when the fastener is closed.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claim 8, wherein said link comprises a connection which is disengaged to open the fastener and re-engaged to re-form the link after it has been disengaged by said force.

Claim 10 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claims 8 or claim 9, wherein said link comprises a female element and male element, said female element being engaged with said male element to close the link.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claims 8 or claim 9, wherein said link comprises a projection extending away from the surface of the stringer tapes, whereby said link is desengageable when said force is applied to said projection.

Claim 12 (original): A fastener as claimed in claim 8, wherein said link comprises a frangible element which is breakable to disengage the link.

Claim 13 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claim 12, wherein said link comprises a fused area of stringer tape.

Claim 14 (withdrawn): A fastener as claimed in claim 12, wherein said link comprises an additional area of tape which is fused onto said stringer tape.

Claim 15 (original): A fastener as claimed in claim 4, wherein the force required to release or displace the holding means is less than 400 N, said force being applied to an area of the fastener adjacent to the holding means, in a direction substantially perpendicular to the surface of the stringer tape adjacent to the holding means.

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Claim 16 (original): A fastener as claimed in claim 4, wherein the force required to release the holding means is greater than 300 N, said force being applied to an area of the fastener adjacent to the holding means, in a direction substantially perpendicular to the plane of the stringer tape adjacent to the holding means.

Claim 17 (currently amended): ~~A fastener for closing an airbag cover, said fastener being as claimed in claim 4 as claimed in claim 4, further comprising an airbag cover, wherein said fastener closes said airbag cover.~~

Claim 18 (currently amended): A fastener as claimed in claim 4, further comprising a cover for a motor vehicle seat, comprising said cover having an opening for an airbag, and a fastener as claimed in claim 4, said said fastener being attached to said cover at said opening to close said opening.

Claims 19-21 (cancelled).